

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW IMMEDIATE

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SUBJECT - VOA PROGRAMMING: TRADE BILL

REFERENCE - MOSCOW 18930-C

1. VOA RUSSIAN BROADCASTS HAVE REPORTED FULLY ON REACTION TO GROMYKO LETTER AND TASS STATEMENT AS WELL AS TRADE BILL PASSAGE SINCE EVENTS BEGAN TO UNFOLD DECEMBER 18. THERE HAS BEEN ALMOST HOURLY MENTION ON NEWSCASTS. IN ADDITION CORRESPONDENTS' REPORTS AND NEWS ANALYSES HAVE DEALT WITH ISSUE.

2. AS NOTED BY NYT SOURCES, "US PRESS ON USSR" FEATURES ON DECEMBER 21 AND 22 DID NOT DISCUSS TRADE BILL REACTION. THIS WAS BECAUSE MOST OF WHAT APPEARED IN PRESS DURING PREVIOUS WEEK OVERTAKEN BY PASSAGE OF TRADE BILL LATER DECEMBER 20. "EVENTS AND OPINIONS" ON BOTH DAYS CARRIED CORRESPONDENTS' REPORTS ON TRADE BILL PASSAGE, IN TERMS OF EFFECT ON OVERALL STRUCTURE OF U.S. FOREIGN TRADE. PREVIOUS REPORTS AND ANALYSES COVERED

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REACTION TO TASS STATEMENT BY WHITE HOUSE, STATE, CONGRESS,

SOVIET DISSIDENTS AND PRAVDA.

3. MUCH OF U.S. PRESS DID NOT REACT EDITORIALY TO TRADE BILL PASSAGE UNTIL DECEMBER 23 - E.G. NEW YORK TIMES AND WASHINGTON POST. VOA PREPARED ROUNDUP OF EDITORIAL REACTION ON PASSAGE OF TRADE BILL AND LINK TO EMIGRATION ISSUE CITING WP, NYT, LA TIMES, BALTIMORE SUN AND WALL STREET JOURNAL ON DECEMBER 23. THIS WAS CARRIED ON VOA RUSSIAN DECEMBER 23 AND WILL BE CARRIED AGAIN ON "PANORAMA" SHOW DECEMBER 24. PREPARATION OF ROUNDUP AND DECISION TO CARRY IT ON VOA IN NO WAY RELATED TO REFTEL, WHICH WAS RECEIVED LATER.

4. SOVIET DISSIDENT SOURCES PERHAPS DO NOT REALIZE THAT TASS STATEMENT AND GROMYKO LETTER DREW LITTLE REACTION IN CONGRESS, WHICH AFFECTED PRESS COVERAGE. MUCH OF PRESS COMMENTARY CENTERS ON EFFECT OF TRADE BILL ON FUTURE FOREIGN TRADE NEGOTIATIONS AND THIS HAS BEEN REFLECTED IN VOA OUTPUT.

5. EMBASSY MAY DRAW ON THIS CABLE IN RESPONDING TO NYT OR OTHER PRESS ENQUIRIES. IN ADDITION EMBASSY SHOULD NOTE THAT VOA BELIEVES IT HAS GIVEN FAIR AND OBJECTIVE COVERAGE TO ALL ASPECTS OF TRADE/EMIGRATION ISSUE FROM THE OUTSET.

DECONTROL: DECEMBER 31, 1975.
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